



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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School Committee Minutes 04/26/2011

Approved by Arlington School Committee May 24, 2011

Arlington School Committee

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, April 26, 2011

7:30 p.m.

School Committee Room, 6th Floor

869 Massachusetts Avenue

Arlington, MA 02476

Present: Ms. Cindy Starks, Chair, Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Vice Chair, Mr. Judson Pierce, Secretary, Ms. Leba Heigham, Mr. William Hayner, Mr. Jeff Thielman

Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Dr. Wallis Raemer, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Ms. Linda Hanson, AEA Representative, Student Representative Ms. Carolyn Donovan and Ms. Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant.

Absent: Mr. Joseph Curro, Mr. Mark Ryder Director of Special Education, and Steve Pereira, AAA Representative

Mr. Spiegel exited the meeting at 8:18 p.m. and returned at 8:20 p.m.

Ms. Starks opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and informed the committee that Mr. Curro was away on business. Ms. Starks welcomed Arlington High School Senior, Student Representative Carolyn Donovan.

Student Voices

Ms. Sheffler and students from Nagaokakyo sister city were introduced to the School Committee and the students expressed their appreciation for the support from the Arlington Community during the past month to Japan and said they were excited to be here in Arlington, MA.

Ms. Starks mentioned the Peirce School Display of Artwork in the School Committee Room.

Public Participation (Per File BEDH, Arlington School Committee Policy Manual) (10 minutes)

- *Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material.*
- *Issues requiring extensive discussion may be deferred to a future meeting with a scheduled agenda item.*
- *All remarks will be addressed through the chairperson of the meeting.*

None

Budget Materials to Town Meeting

Dr. Bodie thanked Dr. Allison-Ampe and Ms. Starks for thier support in reviewing the Budget Books for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 to Town Meeting. Mr. Hayner heard the Town Meeting Members were thrilled to have the Budget Books

on the first night of Town Meeting, and appreciated that this request from last year was heard.

Ms. Starks presented the new proposed Article 17 with changes, which Juliana Rice provided in an email tonight.

Mr. Thielman moved to approve Article 17 as amended by Town Counsel, seconded by Mr. Pierce.

Voted: 6-0

Ms. Starks said the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and the Town Manager supports Article 31 and wondered if the School Committee would support this article or not.

It was discussed and decided to hold off on voting on Article 31 due to contract negotiations with the union members.

Ms. Starks introduced Mr. Robert Spiegel, Human Resource Officer to the meeting tonight and welcomed him to Arlington.

Fee Collection Concerns

Ms. Johnson provided the School Committee members with a report showing the data the Business Office has encountered with a number of difficulties on the collection of fees. Ms. Johnson said the vast majority of participating parents have paid but there have been some who have not. Ms. Johnson has requested direction from the School Committee on ways to insure that those who should pay do so. The outstanding collection of fees is highest among the Kindergarten and Pre-School programs. Ms. Johnson asked the School Committee what direction she should go on policies and procedures to urge these parents to provide the requested documentation of financial need.

After hearing the School Committee members say that School Committee sets the policies and it is up to the administration to enforce them, Mr. Thielman suggested to Ms. Johnson she write a warning letter and set up meetings and speak directly with each family to discuss their financial needs. It was suggested Ms. Johnson also investigate how other communities are handling the collection of fees.

Dr. Bodie said she will soon prepare a letter to parents and said legal counsel and the School Committee members will review the letter before going out.

Ms. Heigham requests Ms. Johnson to prepare a plan and procedures on the collection of fees and give this documentation to the School Committee members.

FY '12 Budget discussion

Dr. Bodie provided Additional Revenue Allocation of \$224,000, which was approved by the Finance Committee. Dr. Bodie presented the Recommendations for \$224,000 as follows:

Music and Art (1 day/week) at the Elementary level in the amount of \$160,000
World Language (.6) at the Middle School in the amount of \$30,000
Social Worker (.6) at the high school in the amount of \$34,000
Total \$224,000

Dr. Bodie said this \$224,000 is not included in the FY 12 Budget the School Committee voted and approved March 8, 2011 but would include this amount as an amendment to the budget.

Mr. Thielman moved to accept Superintendent Bodie's recommendation of receiving \$224,000, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 6-0

Override

Dr. Bodie proposed the following revised Proposed Additions to FY 12 Level Service Budget:

Reduction in Athletic Fees \$100,000
Restoration of Elementary Physical Education to 2009-2010 level (2X/wk) \$120,000
Restoration of reading and Mathematics Support at Ottoson Middle School to 2009-2010 level (.04 Reading, 1.0 Math)

\$80,000

Elective Courses at OMS to Reduce Directed Studies \$100,000

0.6 Physical Education Teacher (OMS) \$30,000

.04 Social Worker (OMS) \$20,000

Elective Courses at High School (totaling 2.0FTE) to Reduce Directed Studies \$100,000

Elementary Teacher (1.0) \$50,000

Total: \$600,000

Mr. Thielman moved to accept the proposal of Superintendent Bodie on FY 12 Level Service Budget for \$600,000 provided the override is successful on June 7, 2011, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Vote: 6-0

Ms. Starks considered the Board of Selectmen wording on the language of the Override question for the June 7, 2011 Special Election.

Ms. Heigham moved to support the language of the Override question, "Shall the Town of Arlington be allowed to assess an additional \$6,490,000. in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the operating budgets of the Town and the Public Schools for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 6-0

Ms. Heigham moved to approve the Three Year Override Commitments

- No operating override will be requested for at least three years.
- Town and School operating budget increases will be capped at 3.5% per year. An additional allowance of up to 7% shall be allowed for documented special education cost increases. Should actual special education cost increases exceed this amount, the remaining School budget shall be decreased by the difference.
- Health care cost increases will be programmed at 7%. Should actual increases exceed this amount, the Town and School budget totals shall be proportionately decreased by the excess amount. Should actual increases be less than this amount as a result of negotiated health care savings, the Town and School budget totals may be proportionately increased by the difference.
- Each year an additional \$600,000 shall be appropriated for core school services for the school department and \$400,000 shall be appropriated in the public works budget for road improvements, said amount shall be in addition to the amount currently appropriated in the capital budget for road improvements.
- Reserves will be maintained at 5% of operating revenues over the course of three-year commitment period, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 6-0

Mr. Thielman moved to table Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Pierce.

Voted: 6-0

Consent Agenda - All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

*Approval of Warrant # 11135 Total Warrant Amount \$ 274,627.53 dated April 5, 2011

*Approval of Warrant # 11140 Total Warrant Amount \$351,692.03 dated April 12, 2011

*Approval of School Committee Minutes March 22, 2011 and Special School Committee meeting March 28, 2011

Ms. Starks moved to split the consent agenda and approve Warrant # 11135 Total Warrant Amount \$ 274,627.53 dated April 5, 2011 and Warrant # 11140 Total Warrant Amount \$351,692.03 dated April 12, 2011.
Voted: 6-0

Ms. Starks moved the Approval of School Committee Minutes March 22, 2011 and Special School Committee meeting March 28, 2011.
Voted: 5-0-1, Mr. Hayner abstained.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bodie's report included additional ACMI Education Programs with Ms. Kerry Dunne, Mr. Skidmore and School Committee members.

Secretary's Report Mr. Pierce

Email regarding Diversity Coffee Social on April 14th
Email regarding HR position job description.
Email from Ms. Fitzgerald forwarding Town Counsel's information for new committee members
Email from Ms. Fitzgerald concerning agenda of SC meeting on April 26th, school calendar vote and Special Ed FY 12 Budget Report.
Email from Mr. Curro regarding information pertaining to Article 17.
Several emails regarding the Cherry Fest to take place this Thursday at the Ottoson from 6:30-8:00pm.
Email regarding Guidelines for Advertising Banners at School Sporting Events
Email from Representative Garballey concerning health care legislation
Email from Manager Sullivan regarding health care legislation
Email regarding 2011 Fin Committee Report
Emails to Principal Skidmore and the School Committee regarding the football coach at the High School
Email forwarding information concerning the slides at Robbins Farm
Email from parent concerning school add backs
Draft minutes from Regular Meeting and Organizational Meeting on April 12, 2011

Ms. Heigham moved to remove Executive Session from the table, seconded by Dr. Allison-Ampe.
Voted: 6-0

Mr. Thielman moved to enter Executive Session at 8:48 p.m. for the following reasons:

- **To comply with the provisions of any general or special law to protect confidentiality of personnel matter.**
- **To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation when an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the committee.**
- **To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel, or to conduct collect bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel and to go into a 10 minute Recess, seconded by Mr. Hayner.**

Roll Call: unanimous

Recess 8:48 – 9:00

Adjournment

Ms. Heigham voted to adjourn at 10:58 p.m. seconded by Mr. Thielman.
Voted: 6-0

Respectfully submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/jp